

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6088

As Reported by House Committee On: Capital Budget

Title: An act relating to commute trip reduction for state agencies.

Brief Description: Addressing commute trip reduction for state agencies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, Swecker, Haugen, Eide, Marr, Sheldon, Berkey, Benton and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Capital Budget: 3/31/09, 4/6/09 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House)

- Transfers current responsibilities related to commute trip reduction (CTR) programs for state agencies from the Department of General Administration to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
- Directs the WSDOT to develop a joint comprehensive CTR plan for all state agencies located in the Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater urban growth areas.
- Requires state agencies located in the Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater urban growth areas to, within 90 days after adoption of the joint CTR plan, implement a CTR program consistent with the adopted CTR plan.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Blake, Chase, Grant-Herriot, Jacks, Maxwell, Orwall and White.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Warnick, Ranking Minority Member; Pearson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Hope, McCune and Smith.

Staff: Steve Masse (786-7115)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Commute Trip Reduction.

The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law was passed in 1991 and is incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. The goals of the program are to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and petroleum consumption through employer-based programs that decrease the number of commute trips made by single-occupant drivers.

Each county containing an urban growth area (UGA), and each city within an UGA with a state highway segment exceeding the 100 person hours-of-delay threshold, as well as those counties and cities located in any contiguous UGA, are required to adopt a CTR plan and ordinance for major employers in the affected UGA. At present, the state's nine largest counties are required to implement CTR plans, which includes the counties of Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima.

"Person hours-of-delay" means the daily number of hours of delay per mile experienced by people in their vehicles during the peak period of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. A "major employer" means a private or public employer, including a state agency, that has 100 or more full-time employees at a single worksite who begin their regular workday between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Counties implementing a CTR plan may contract with other organizations, such as the local transit system or regional transportation planning organization, to assist, oversee, or implement the program within the county. To the extent a private or public employer worksite is not otherwise required to participate in a CTR program, voluntary participation is both allowed and encouraged.

Each major employer in a jurisdiction that adopts a CTR plan must develop and implement a CTR program which, among other things, includes a set of measures designed to achieve CTR goals. Examples of such measures include: giving preferential parking for high occupancy vehicles; instituting or increasing parking charges for single-occupant vehicles; subsidizing transit fares; providing vans for van pools; and authorizing flexible work schedules. Each local jurisdiction must review each major employer's progress and good faith efforts toward meeting CTR at least once per year. Major employers are also required to annually review employee commuting and progress made toward meeting commute trip reduction goals.

A CTR Task Force (Task Force) was created and assigned the primary responsibility of establishing guidelines for the development of CTR plans by affected local jurisdictions to ensure consistency in plans and goals among jurisdictions. The Task Force was also charged with working with jurisdictions and major employers to develop and implement a public awareness campaign designed to increase local CTR program effectiveness, and reviewing and reporting on the progress of CTR plans to the Legislature.

Based on recommendations made by the Task Force to the Legislature in 2005, the Commute Trip Reduction Efficiency Act (Act) was enacted in 2006. The Act replaced the 28-member Task Force with a 16-member CTR Board (Board), chaired by the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) or her designee. Board membership includes representatives from two state agencies, one representative of the

Office of the Governor, three representatives from local governments, two representatives from transit agencies, two representatives from regional transportation planning organizations, four representatives of employers, and two citizens. Among other things, the Act also modified the scope of the CTR program to focus on urban growth areas with the most congested state highways, and expanded the role of the WSDOT and regional transportation planning organizations in CTR planning.

The Legislature has also declared that it is the policy of the state that the Department of General Administration (GA) and other state agencies aggressively develop substantive programs to reduce commute trips by state employees. The GA is authorized to coordinate an interagency board for the purpose of developing policies or guidelines that promote consistency among state agency CTR programs. The policies and guidelines developed by the GA and the interagency board are applicable to all state agencies. State agencies that share a common location in urban growth areas where the total number of state employees is at least 100 must, with the assistance of the GA, develop and implement a joint CTR plan. The GA must coordinate and review state agency CTR plans and performance reviews. Annually, the GA must submit a report to the CTR Board on progress in attaining applicable CTR goals.

Within the WSDOT budget, funding is provided for the WSDOT to manage and administer the CTR program, to provide technical assistance to organizations required to implement the program, including the GA and state agencies, and to distribute to local jurisdictions and employers to offset some of the implementation costs. In the 2007–2009 biennium, the state invested approximately \$5.5 million in CTR efforts and local governments (counties, cities, and transit systems) provided an additional investment.

More than 1,110 worksites and more than 560,000 commuters statewide participate in the CTR program. It is estimated that in 2007, CTR employees in the Central Puget Sound made more than 19,200 fewer vehicle trips each weekday morning than they did when their employers entered the program, and the absence of these trips reduced travel delay by an estimated 18 percent on average during the peak morning commute.

Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee.

The Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee (CCDAC) serves in an advisory capacity to the State Capitol Committee and the GA by reviewing programs, planning, designing, and landscaping of state capitol facilities. The CCDAC makes recommendations to support the attainment of architectural, aesthetic, functional, and environmental excellence in design and maintenance of capitol facilities located on the state capitol campus and in neighboring communities. The CCDAC's review must include consideration of the siting of state capitol facilities relative to the service needs of the state and the impact on the local community's economy, environment, traffic patterns, and other factors, and must also consider the comprehensive plans for long-range urban development of the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater, and of Thurston County.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The CTR responsibilities currently assigned to the GA regarding coordination of state agency CTR programs are shifted to the WSDOT, including: coordinating with the interagency board and reviewing individual agency programs for consistency with the policies and guidelines developed by the CTR Board. The WSDOT must review each agency's internal performance reports and submit a biennial report for state agencies to the Governor's office, and must also incorporate this state agency CTR biennial report into the CTR Board's report to the Legislature.

The GA and other state agencies, including institutions of higher education, are included in the coordination effort.

The Joint Comprehensive Commute Trip Reduction plan is added to the coordination effort.

The WSDOT is directed to develop a joint comprehensive CTR plan for all state agencies, including institutions of higher education, located in the urban growth areas of the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater. In developing the joint CTR plan, the WSDOT must collaborate with local jurisdictions, planning organizations, transit agencies, and the CCDAC. The joint plan must build on existing CTR programs and policies, and must include strategies for telework and flexible work schedules as well as performance measures and reporting requirements. No more than 90 days after adoption of the joint CTR plan, the state agencies located within the urban growth areas of the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater must implement a CTR program consistent with the joint CTR plan.

A null and void is provided, specifying that funding must be provided in the Capital Budget Appropriations Act.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The GA and other state agencies, including institutions of higher education, are included in the coordination effort.

The Joint Comprehensive Commute Trip Reduction plan is added to the coordination effort.

State agencies is defined, per RCW 40.060.10, as every state office, officer, department, division, bureau, board, commission and agency of the state, and, where applicable, all subdivisions of each.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Currently, CTR programs for state agencies in the capitol area are done on a building by building basis. We need a structure for CTR planning that takes an area-wide approach. Employees who commute from the north and people who come from the north for session are forced to drive because there are really no viable alternatives. Requiring all agencies in the capitol area to take an area approach might help address this problem. State employee commutes have a huge impact on traffic in the Olympia area. This bill is based on recommendations from a capitol campus study which indicated that we need to create leadership and consistency in regard to state agency commute trip reduction programs. We need to make sure the relevant parties are at the discussion table no matter which agency is the lead. Some suggestions to improve the bill are to include all state agencies, including higher education; streamline reporting for small agencies; provide guidance on what the shared program contains; allow for consideration in resources/transit available at different worksites; and consider how to transfer funds from the GA to the WSDOT to support the program. Because the CTR program is primarily housed within the WSDOT, putting coordination of the state agency piece in the WSDOT will increase efficiencies and raise the profile of the work. A menu of options for state agencies in three urban growth areas might make more sense than requiring one program. Language should be added to make siting of state facilities a component of the CTR program. Thought should be given to whether the WSDOT or the Interagency CTR Board should be the agency to coordinate among all agencies in the three urban growth areas.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Fraser, prime sponsor; Brian Lagerberg, Washington State Department of Transportation; Karen Parkhurst, Thurston Regional Planning Council; and Joan Cullen, Department of General Administration.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.